



You made healthful rest available to all 40 of our residents. That was no small task. Thank You!!! If I had space to write Thank You forty times, I would do so. Each elder at the Center is truly grateful for their new beds we received this spring.

In one of my letters, I wrote about what Edna Seminole said to me concerning her bed. Edna has lived with us for nearly 15 years now. She was the second elder to make Heritage Living Center her home in 2002. While we were chatting, Edna paused and spoke, "Mike, my bed hurts." She carefully touched her hip and continued, "I have bad arthritis and it hurts in my lumpy bed. The beds here are not good." I knew we had to do something about the old beds at the Center.

Donors from around the country heard my plea and sent donations to purchase new mattresses for the elders. I must admit though, I didn't realize how difficult it would be to purchase that many mattresses and have them delivered to our remote location.

US Highway 212 runs through the heart of our tiny town of Ashland, Montana. It is a truck route with hundreds of 18-wheelers passing through each day. So many trucks use US 212 that it is a dangerous stretch of road through both the Northern

Cheyenne Indian Reservation and the Crow Indian Reservation. You would think that mattresses could be loaded onto a truck and then delivered upon arrival to Ashland. We learned it doesn't work that way. The mattresses were a long time coming.



Mike Skaggs readies new mattresses to be delivered to the elders' apartments.

Thankfully, the mattresses are here now. We were so excited on delivery day as the new mattresses came off the trucks and the old, worn out mattresses were loaded on and taken away. The elders are now resting and recovering from the ailments of their senior years. Thank you, many times over, from 40 grateful elders for what you have made available to them.



Resident Susie Tall White Man Cain claims her new mattress.

I must tell you about our exciting summer filled with earthquakes and fires. In early July, an earthquake struck in the mountain town of Lincoln, Montana, several hundred miles from here. The shock of the quake was felt north in Canada and far into southeast Montana. It was an odd feeling as the ground shook around 12:30 at night. The heavy sleepers in their new beds didn't feel it. Thankfully, we suffered no damage.

Spring and early summer started out

with above normal rainfall. The grasses grow tall for horses and cattle with abundant moisture. That blessing can be a curse as fuel builds for wildfires later in the summer.

Hot weather came earlier than normal in June and July spiking temperatures in the high 90s and over 100 degrees. The region quickly dried up to create dangerous fire conditions.

The hot weather generates big storms and when lightning strikes a fire can explode. Even a horse trailer hitch safety chain dragging on a gravel road can spark a grass fire.

As I write to you, there are 15 active fires in Montana. One is close to the elders' home. It is a few miles south of us and we keep a close eye on it. If it turns north, we are ready to evacuate the elders and do all we can to protect the Heritage Living Center.

Please pray for the elders' safety,

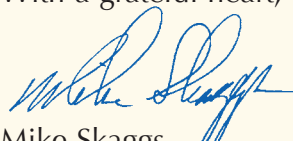
our vigilant staff and the protection of the "Miracle on the Hill" during our fire season.

Thank you for coming to our aid to upgrade our fire sprinkler system. Gifts are coming in to help us pay the unexpected cost to bring our system up to new safety standards. Parts and supplies are arriving and repairs are scheduled for early August. Inside this newsletter, you will find a photo of the Center's administrator, Jerry Thex, sitting in front of the complex system of pumps, valves and expansion tanks that make the fire sprinklers work. We hope this system is never needed but we're glad we will have it updated soon.

You will also find on the next page a very interesting article about one of our newest residents, Pauline Eaglefeathers and her family history. Pauline's mother, Rose, was a resident of Heritage Living Center before my time. Father Emmett told me stories about Rose and how she incessantly teased him. Father would tease back at her knowing she was living some of the best years of her life at the Center. He knew she was happy with her safe home and nutritious meals each day.

I hope you enjoy reading our summer edition of "Signals." Please remember the elders as you share your generous donations with us. We ask God to abundantly bless you for your prayers and support.

With a grateful heart,


Mike Skaggs

CHEYENNE HISTORY FOLLOWS PAULINE EAGLEFEATHERS TO HLC



By John Warner

Pauline Eaglefeathers recently moved into the Heritage Living Center and along with a bright smile she also unpacked - like many of our residents - an extraordinary and sweeping family history.

Pauline is a direct descendent of Chief Morning Star, a name found among the most revered of all Indian chiefs in Native American history. Morning Star, whose name is uniquely interchangeable with his Indian-given nickname of Dull Knife in history books and on the reservation today (take your pick) is

Pauline's great-great-grandfather.

Dull Knife is the Northern Cheyenne tribe's most recognized chief for leading a band of 350 Cheyennes on a flight to return to their Montana homeland in 1878 from terrible conditions during confinement in the Oklahoma Territory. The story of the journey is epic. It ended in part in a heroic and tragic breakout by 150 Cheyennes on January 9, 1879 from a barracks at Fort Robinson, Nebraska in a blizzard, which resulted in the death of dozens of fleeing Cheyenne warriors, women and children. The

Pauline Eaglefeathers revels in her Cheyenne family history.

courageous breakout ensured the survival of a sizable portion of the Northern Cheyenne Nation, who were given their present day reservation land five years later in 1884.

Earlier this summer, elders from our small town boarded the Center's minibus and traveled to Billings, Montana to view an exhibit at the Western Heritage Center, a regional museum. (See page 7 for more about the elders' visit.) While viewing the exhibit, Pauline saw numerous displays including family members among the historic photographs of the early frontier era. She pointed out the names of relatives and ancestors who were all part of the Northern Cheyenne story of survival in a dramatically changing world.

Pauline quickly gravitated to the printed lists of names on display. She pointed to one name with a picture above it, "This is my great-great grandfather." Not that she'd always known this. "I didn't realize it until I was in high school," she said about finding out she was Morning Star's great-great-granddaughter. Pauline had lived all her life in the small town of Busby on the Western border of the small 20x40 mile reservation. She's not sure exactly when she discovered her lineage, but knows she didn't learn it in school on the reservation.

Indian history was not a part of the curriculum back then.

Being a direct descendent of Dull Knife (lore has it the nickname was bestowed by hunting mates who observed an event where he had a persistent struggle skinning an animal) is not something to say much about publicly, which attracts special attention on the reservation. The thing is, everyone is related to someone who is revered in tribal history; no one is left out when it comes to being related to someone very important, someone who did big things long ago. All Cheyennes get to take pride in their history and heritage. The reverence for Dull Knife though is unmatched. Chief Dull Knife College is located in Lane Deer, the high school sports teams are the Morning Stars, and the Northern Cheyenne tribe calls itself The Morning Star People.

Right: Pauline’s brother, Clifford Eaglefeathers, a Northern Cheyenne ceremonial man, performing a cloth blessing for HLC elder, Richard Tallbull, during a recent visit.

Pauline’s brother Clifford Eaglefeathers came to HLC for a visit at the end of June. A Northern Cheyenne ceremonial man, Clifford was asked to perform a cloth blessing for the residents at HLC. They gathered in the front commons and listened intently to the man with the soft but clear voice. “You have everything here (for your spirituality.) The plants, the rocks, the earth paints. Cheyennes are known everywhere, people want to be Cheyenne, but not everyone can be Cheyenne. Practice the Cheyenne ways. Pray for the little ones, pray for the future. Let’s help each other. If someone needs help, help them.” One by one, Clifford blessed the



residents and staff as he moved prayer cloths aerated with cedar smoke over and around them.

Clifford wanted everyone to know

Pauline produced some older photos of Dull Knife and the family that came before her: Dull Knife, his daughter, then her daughter, and Rose (seated below left).



where he lives - in a small town of 600 in New York state - where the right kind of rocks needed for the sweat lodge do not exist. Nor does sweetgrass, or sage, or good cedar. “It’s all right here!” he reminded everyone out loud, and seemingly himself, once again.

Last year Pauline was one of many Cheyennes who journeyed to Fort Robinson, Nebraska, for the dedication of a Cheyenne memorial recognizing their relatives in the famous Fort Robinson Breakout. It was a special moment in her life because her mother, Rose Eaglefeathers, was one of two women who started the whole project 15 years ago. Rose lived at the Heritage Center along with Edna Seminole and the two worked together fundraising, designing and building the memorial piece by huge piece. They traveled back and forth together to the site for more than a decade. Rose passed in 2014, leaving Edna to finish

their vision. The dedication of the spectacular monument was featured in this newsletter, and prominently in many newspapers including The Billings Gazette. Edna and her family were there basking in the joy of the moment. And Edna, who was in the very first “class” to move into HLC, recently celebrated her 90th birthday here!

“I’m very proud of what my mom did, I’m so glad that memorial is there,” Pauline said of Rose. “It was a great day.” She holds a photo showing Rose, Pauline, Pauline’s daughter, and her daughter’s daughter. “Four generations,” she says. Then she pulled out some older photos of Dull



Knife and the family that came before her; Dull Knife, his daughter, then her daughter, and finally Rose. Four more generations. The history in the images nearly cracks the glass.

Above Right: Rose Eaglefeathers (right) and Edna Seminole (left) standing at the Fort Robinson barracks where their relatives and many other Northern Cheyenne relatives were held prisoner.

Right: 2016, Northern Cheyenne journeyed to Crawford, Nebraska for the dedication of a memorial that honors the relatives involved in the Fort Robinson Breakout, 1879.



A TRIBUTE TO CONNIE SUMP

Conrad “Connie” Sump and Father Emmett Hoffmann were best friends. They were more like brothers than friends. They toiled together in the hard work God put before them. One a Catholic priest. The other a Lutheran layman – an accountant by profession.

Father and Connie met in the 1960s and over the years they helped the Cheyenne people change life on their small reservation in southeast Montana. Schools, homes, churches and factories were built. Most significantly, the Heritage Living Center became a home for elders who needed a safe place to live with nutritious meals and

assisted-living care.

Connie Sump peacefully passed away on April 4. A small delegation from Heritage Living Center represented the elders at his funeral service bringing their prayers, a traditional woolen blanket and beaded cross to honor and pay respect to a man who helped them for 50 years.

Goodbye Connie. Rest in your eternal rewards. May you and Father Emmett keep an eye on us and direct Heaven’s blessing our way.

Connie visiting his best friend, Father Emmett, at HLC in 2012.



JERRY’S WORLD



Above: Jerry Thex is Heritage Living Center’s Administrator and mechanical wizard. He and the maintenance team keep the Center humming including the fire sprinkler system pictured behind him.

Left: The small leak in a fire sprinkler head led to a major sprinkler system upgrade costing over \$18,000. Work is progressing. Thank you for your generous gifts.



CRAFT SALE

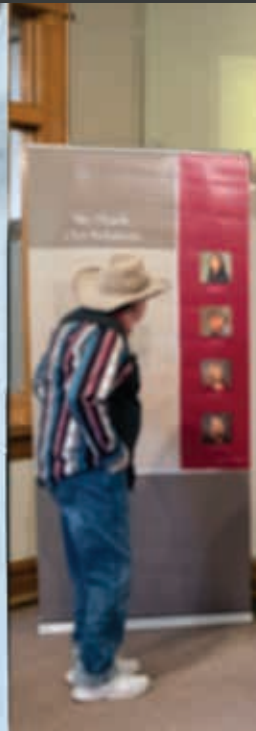
The Center elders held a craft sale to raise funds for activities and trips they enjoy throughout the year. Handcrafts, handmade clothing, beadwork, and art were just some of the items for sale to bargain hunters. Funds collected go to a special fund earmarked for trips to sacred sites such as Bear Butte in South Dakota, ceremonial sites and hot springs with medicinal qualities.

DETACH, MOISTEN GLUE STRIP AND SEAL

COMING HOME: THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE ODYSSEY

"I tell you now the name of my son who was killed: we call himGathering His Medicine. Lots of times, as I sit here alone on the floor with my blanket wrapped about me, I lean forward and close my eyes and think of him standing up out of the pit and fighting the soldiers, knowing that he would be killed, but doing this so that his little sister might get away to safety. Don't you think he was a brave young man?"

Iron Teeth
Thomas Marquis Collection P165.180
Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, WY



Above: HLC minibus parked outside the Western Heritage Center in Billings.

Right: Pauline Eaglefeathers (right) and Lazona Harris (left) read through one of the exhibit's murals.

In June, Heritage Living Center's elders rode the center's minibus 125 miles to the Western Heritage Center, Billings, MT to view a traveling exhibition, *Coming Home: The Northern Cheyenne Odyssey*.

The exhibit displayed murals of old Cheyenne photos and quotes chosen to emphasize difficulties the tribe experienced. Artifacts like buffalo hide coats and beaded clothing depicted the Plains Indian culture. A videotaped interview of a Cheyenne historian describing episodes in Cheyenne history handed down through oral traditions attracted anyone with the time to sit in a small theatre and listen.



INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS – GOOD GIFTS FOR GOOD WORKS



Many Americans have Individual Retirement Accounts, better known as IRAs. Sometimes they saved directly to an IRA planning for their retirement future. Other times, when someone changed jobs, they rolled over their 401(k), 403(b) and other qualified plans sponsored by their employer into an IRA.

Over time, those retirement savings grew to a comfortable nest egg. However, at age 70½, the federal law says it's time to start recognizing some of those tax-advantaged savings and paying taxes on each annual distribution. Even after taking a distribution, some

retirees saw their savings grow due to the investments they had made.

Years ago, Congress encouraged charitable giving from those tax-advantaged funds and allowed IRA owners to make Qualified Charitable Distributions from their IRA and not be taxed on the distribution. Each year Congress would pass a law, sometimes at the last minute, that allowed a charitably minded person to make gifts directly from their IRA account. Often, Congress acted so late in the year that it didn't give well-meaning donors enough time to plan their donations to significantly help their favorite charities.

Now, you can plan for gifts from your IRA with confidence. It isn't too early to start planning your charitable gifts for the causes important to you. We hope Soaring Eagle is one of your favorite charities and if you choose to give from your IRA, you will consider us and the Heritage Living Center elders we care for as recipients of your generosity.

In December 2015, Congress passed the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act. Known as the PATH Act, the law allows Qualified Charitable Contributions (QCD) from IRAs and is now a permanent law. Donors can now plan how and when they give from their tax-free retirement savings.

One strategy is to take distributions from non-IRA accounts for living expenses after taxes are paid and make direct transfers to charity from an IRA account. You will want to check with your financial advisor to determine the best way and time to transfer retirement funds to meet your charitable goals.

The requirements get a little complicated but here are the basic rules for Qualified Charitable Distributions:

- 1.** Funds must be transferred directly from the IRA to Soaring Eagle. Please don't take the distribution and then make your donation. You'll have to pay taxes on the income first if you do. The distribution must come straight to Soaring Eagle.

2.

Applies only to distributions from IRAs. That is why it is smart planning to use 401(k) and other qualified plans for retirement living expenses as those funds will be taxed.
3.

IRA owner must be age 70 ½ or older on the date of the donation from the IRA to Soaring Eagle.
4.

The maximum limit is \$100,000 per person in a single year. A married couple with adequate IRA savings can give a total of \$200,000 each year.
5.

The distribution gift must go to a public charity like Soaring Eagle.
6.

The QCD counts towards satisfying the IRA owner’s Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for the year.
- If your IRA holds stocks, bonds and mutual funds, then you may want to consider transferring assets directly to Soaring Eagle without converting those assets to cash. We have simple instructions on how to make those transfers. We can mail, fax or email those to you or your advisor. Please contact us for how to transfer an asset from you IRA.
- How Often Can I Give from My IRA?
- That is a good question. The answer is it depends on your unique situation. Some donors find it is convenient to give on a regular basis (monthly, quarterly, etc.) from their IRAs. Others find special and extra-ordinary donations made once a year are ideal for giving from an IRA. Your

advisor can guide you as he or she will know a fuller picture of your finances and help you create a plan to meet your personal needs and charitable goals.

Soaring Eagle, of course, appreciates receiving your financial help as often as you can share with us. We know that your personal care and financial security should come first as you make your plans.

A Final Thought

One of life’s fears is living longer than your money. It is one of those worries nearly everyone has no matter how much or little you have saved.

Sometimes though, a good donor will pass away leaving funds in their IRA and other retirement accounts. Naming Soaring Eagle as a beneficiary of a retirement account might be a tax-wise way to give at the end of life and preserve other meaningful assets to pass along to family and friends.

Naming Soaring Eagle as a beneficiary is usually a simple matter and can be accomplished by asking your advisor for a beneficiary designation form for your account. Be sure to consider the impact of your decision on your other estate plan gifts to others. For some, it is a smart and easy way to include a charitable dimension in their end of life plans. Keep in mind that the assets are there for you to use during life no matter what expenses or desires you have to spend your savings on. They are


only transferred at death when you no longer need the asset.

Effective Giving

Many of our friends are blessed with plentiful resources to provide for themselves, loved ones, and the charities important to them. Choosing what to give, when to give, and how to give can be rewarding once it is completed, so don’t put it off. Year’s end will be here before we know it and time may be too short to put good plans in place if you wait.

To help you learn more, we have prepared a booklet entitled “Giving Through Retirement Plans” that we would be pleased to send to you. Please contact Mike Skaggs, CEO, Soaring Eagle, P.O. Box 879, Billings, MT 59103 or call 406-256-8500.

The information in this newsletter is presented to Soaring Eagle’s donors and friends to provide general information and encourage charitable giving. Soaring Eagle is a public charity incorporated in the state of Montana and does not engage in rendering legal, tax, financial, or any other professional advice. Consult your own professional advisors as it pertains to your individual situation. Consult an attorney if your plans require the creation of or revision of a will or other legal document. Tax deductions vary based on numerous factors including personal financial circumstances, tax codes, and applicable federal discount rates, which can change each month. Charitable gift annuities may not be available in all states.




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To learn more about the benefits of a Soaring Eagle gift annuity, please use the coupon in this newsletter or call Mike Skaggs at 406-256-8500, Soaring Eagle, PO Box 879, Billings, MT 59103.

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Age	% Rate	Age	% Rate
65	4.7	78	6.4
66	4.8	79	6.6
67	4.8	80	6.8
68	4.9	81	7.0
69	5.0	82	7.2
70	5.1	83	7.4
71	5.3	84	7.6
72	5.4	85	7.8
73	5.5	86	8.0
74	5.7	87	8.2
75	5.8	88	8.4
76	6.0	89	8.7
77	6.2	90+	9.0

Lower two-life rates are available. Please contact us for information.



YOUR WILL KEEPS ON GIVING

Please use one of the following sample forms of bequest when preparing your Will:

A. Giving a Specific Amount – “I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, the sum of \$_____.”

B. Giving a Specific Property - “I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, (identify specific property, example: 500 shares of XYZ stock).”

C. Giving a Percentage – “I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, _____% of my estate.”

D. Giving the Residue - “All the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, I bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana.”

E. Giving a Contingent Bequest – “I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana my bequest to (name of intended recipient) should he/she not be living or be able to accept my bequest.”

The above are sample forms only. Consult your attorney when preparing any legal document.

To learn more about giving to Soaring Eagle through your will, request our free booklet “Giving Through Your Will” by writing or calling: Soaring Eagle, PO Box 879, Billings, MT 59103 406-256-8500.

10 *signals*

signals 11

The elders tell me that when birds start eating berries the first week of August, it's surely a sign of an early winter. But we've had a good year for berries and the Cheyenne elders can't wait for a taste of chokecherry pudding.

During my 54 years in Montana, I've heard many stories from the elders about how hard it was in the 1930s, when wild game was scarce on the reservation. They dried berries and wild turnips for winter use in order to survive. Rather than die from slow starvation, they ate prairie dogs and muskrats.

It broke my heart to see desperation and hunger still tightening its grip on these good people. As they suffered in silence, I refused to stand by and do nothing! I still can't accept that in America, we have people who are hungry. I made up my mind that these Cheyenne children of the 1930s who are now old and living at the Heritage Living Center will never be hungry again.

A good friend and fellow Chief of the Council of 44, Jim Medicine Bird, helped his aged mother by



Reminisce with Father Emmett

Nine Years Ago

shaking the trees and picking the plums off the ground. Jim and his mother, Mae, could be seen walking home, each struggling to carry two old lard buckets full of plums and berries.

Jim's grandfather was Ma'om or "Ice," a celebrated storyteller and one of the last of the great medicine men of his tribe. Ma'om fought in the Battle of the Little Bighorn and was known for his healing ceremonies. His grandson Jim grew up listening to the elders and he memorized their old Cheyenne stories and songs. Jim's dad passed away in 1949. From then on, Jim lovingly cared for his mother's every need. But one day, he walked to

town for a few groceries and when he returned, he found his mother on the floor. She had fallen and broken her hip. When she died not long afterward, Jim blamed himself for not being at home when she fell. He spoke about the changing times:

When I was young, those old people had pep. They walked everywhere. They picked berries and shared their food. When they died, we were with them and we buried them in the rim rocks in the old way. But now, old age gets to them quicker and they get sent away to nursing homes. They shouldn't send those old people away from where they were born and raised and where their relatives live. All the old people we relied on for advice are too far away.

The Lord continues to call upon me to feed the poor. Healthy elders live longer, productive lives and that is my main goal. Your donations will "keep the miracle alive" on the hill above Ashland.

Your beggar friend,
Father Emmett



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